<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 26, 2005. Claims 1 to 4 and 6 to 14 remain are pending in the application, of which Claims 1 and 7 to 12 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The title of the invention was objected to as allegedly being non-descriptive. A new title has been provided for a set forth above. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 4 and 6 to 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,701,378 (Gilhuly) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,587,831 (O'Brien). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns updating status information of users that use terminal devices. According to the invention, the user terminal generates information regarding a presence or absence of the user at the terminal. The generated information is transmitted by the terminal device to a server that uses the information to recognize whether or not a user is present or absent at a terminal device. The server searches schedule information of registered users, and generates change information of status information based on the received presence or absence information and the searched schedule. The server then automatically updates the status information of the user and may, for example, transmits the user's present status to other terminal devices.

With specific reference to the claims, amended independent Claim 1 is a status information sharing system for managing status information of users who operate user terminal devices, comprising a recognition unit that recognizes a presence or absence of the users at the user terminal devices, a search unit that searches schedule information of

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registered users, a generation unit that generates change information of status information in accordance with both the recognition of a presence or absence of the users and the searched schedule information; and an update unit that automatically updates status information of the users on the basis of the generated change information.

Amended independent Claim 7 is directed to the terminal device side of the present invention and more specifically is a user terminal device that is capable of communicating with a server device managing schedules of users who operate user terminal devices, comprising a connection unit that connects to at least a manipulation input device or an imaging device, an input unit that inputs information from the connected manipulation unit or imaging device, a generation unit that generates information representing a presence or absence of a user at the user terminal device based on the input information, a transmission unit that transmits the generated information representing the presence or absence of the user at the user terminal device to the server device, and a receiving unit that receives status information of the user which is changed in accordance with both the transmitted information and the schedule information managed by the server device.

Amended independent Claim 8 is directed to the server side of the present invention and more specifically is a server device that is capable of communicating with user terminal devices, comprising a recognition unit that recognizes a presence or absence of users at the user terminal devices, a search unit that searches schedule information of registered users, a generation unit that generates change information of status information in accordance with both the presence or absence of the user and the searched schedule information, and an update unit that automatically updates the status information of the users on the basis of the generated change information.

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Amended independent Claims 9 and 11 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 7, and Claims 10 and 12 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 8.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of a server recognizing the presence or absence of a user at a terminal device, searching schedule information of registered users, generating change information of status information in accordance with both the schedule information and the recognized presence or absence, and updating the status information of the user on the basis of the generated change information.

Gilhuly is merely seen to disclose a user terminal which transmits selected data items in response to the occurrence of a trigger event. (see, for example, column 5, line 48 to column 6, line 20). However, Gilhuly is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of a server recognizing the presence or absence of a user at a terminal device, searching schedule information of registered users, generating change information of status information in accordance with both the schedule information and the recognized presence or absence, and updating the status information of the user on the basis of the generated change information.

O'Brien is not seen to add anything that, when combined with Gilhuly, would have disclosed or suggested the present invention. In this regard, O'Brien is merely seen to disclose a distributed network system in which schedules for employees are generated based on various factors, including staffing requirements, employee constraints, etc. However, like Gilhuly, O'Brien is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of a server recognizing the presence or absence of a user at a terminal device, searching
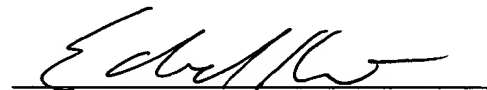
schedule information of registered users, generating change information of status

information in accordance with both the schedule information and the recognized presence

or absence, and updating the status information of the user on the basis of the generated

change information.

In view of the foregoing, amended independent Claims 1 and 7 to 12, as

well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be

in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's

earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,

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our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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